

FLEET FOCUS

VP-4 holds Change of Command

By Lt.j.g. Kelly Hinderer
VP-4

Few military ceremonies are as moving, simple and significant as a Change of Command. It is a visible symbol of the continuity of command, and of the orderly transfer of responsibility and accountability from one naval officer to another. With few variations, Patrol Squadron Four's ceremony was identical to every change of command in the fleet.

Each contain the same moment of transition when the new commanding officer (CO) salutes his predecessor and speaks four words, "I relieve you, sir."

In a morning ceremony on March 31 in the squadron's home hangar, attended by guest speaker, Rear Adm. Michael Holmes, Commander Patrol Wings U.S. Pacific Fleet, Cmdr. James C. Whitaker replaced Cmdr. McWilliam V. Bollman, Jr. as the 51st commanding officer of Patrol Squadron Four (VP-4).

Bollman led the VP-4 'Skinny Dragons' through a year of unparalleled accomplishments. During its Western Pacific (WESTPAC) deployment in 1999, the squadron flew in support of three combat operations. During Operation Desert Fox, VP-4 was the first to utilize the new Anti-surface warfare Improvement Program (AIP) modified P-3 in combat. Their accomplishments in the Gulf earned the squadron the Navy Unit Commendation Medal.

During Operation Noble Anvil in Kosovo, Patrol Squadron Four executed a rapid deployment of two AIP aircraft from the Fifth and Seventh Fleets to the Sixth Fleet for participation in 17 flight events, including five Standoff Land Attack Missile (SLAM) strike missions. Due to the success of these missions in Kosovo, 13 'Skinny Dragons' were awarded Air Medals.

VP-4 ended its unequalled deployment with a 99 percent mission completion rate for Fifth and Sixth Fleet operations. Using Cmdr. Bollman Jr.'s philosophy of "exercising every safe opportunity to achieve mission success," VP-4 safely flew 5,598 hours and 1,084 sorties during his tenure, extending the Skinny Dragon safety record to 27 years and 185,000



PH2(SW) Arlo Abrahamson photo

Cmdr. James C. Whitaker changed hands with Cmdr. McWilliam V. Bollman, Jr. as the 51st commanding officer of Patrol Squadron Four (VP-4) during a change of command ceremony recently.

mishap-free hours.

Bollman also led Patrol Squadron Four through a successful transition from Barbers Point to its new home aboard Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay where the 'Skinny Dragons' have continued to lead the Pacific in Patrol Squadron excellence.

The former CO takes with him many great memories from his tour. He and his wife, Shelly Bollman have played an active role in achieving the Navy's integration into the K-Bay community.

"Most of all, I am proud to say I served with the extraordinary men and women of VP-4," Bollman said. "Flying, being operational and serving on this team that rises to meet every challenge through hard work and camaraderie has been the high-

light of my entire naval career."

Cmdr. and Mrs. Bollman and their family are now on their way to meet new challenges in Washington, D.C.

About his assignment to the Pentagon in the Aviation Programs Division, Cmdr. Bollman said, "I'm excited to continue addressing the parts and sustainment shortfalls we are enduring in today's Navy."

Incoming CO, Cmdr. Craig Whitaker was commissioned an Ensign in October 1983, and completed Aviation Officer Candidate School on the East Coast. He was designated a Naval Flight Officer in December 1984 and completed tours in Patrol Squadron Five, Patrol Squadron 30 and USS Saratoga (CV 60).

In 1994, Cmdr. Whitaker came

west to VP-17 at Barbers Point, Hawaii for his tour as department head. He completed the successful and challenging tour in VP-40, NAS Whidbey Island, Washington after the decommissioning of VP-17 in December 1994.

Following an assignment at the Pentagon's Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), Cmdr. Whitaker was selected for operational command, and reported to Patrol Squadron Four as the Executive Officer (XO) in March 1999.

The new Executive Officer (XO), Cmdr. Marion D. Yancey hails from Lancaster, Calif., and comes to Patrol Squadron Four from the Air War College at Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Alabama.

VP-47 'Golden Swords-men' tell their hometown stories

By Lt. j.g. Michael Sanders

VP-47

THE Sailors of VP-47, stationed at Marine Corps Base Hawaii, connected with their families not by letter or email or telephone recently. Instead Mobile Public Affairs Team (MOPAT) Detachment 220 San Diego arrived to interview and photograph aircraft maintenance workers, administration personnel, and air-crew.

The det helped to send news stories of Sailors and Marines back to where it really counts, the family and friends of each individual's hometown. "This program is for them [the Sailors and Marines]," commented Yeoman Senior Chief Kim Sua, one of the members of MOPAT Det. 220. Patrol Squadron 47 hosted the public affairs team March 20 and 21.

They were in Hawaii for two weeks touring various ships and bases to provide a "good deal" to the Sailors and Marines by writing hometown news stories.

The hometown news program was started to inform family and friends at home about what is happening to their loved ones in the Navy.

Normally, news releases are submitted when someone receives a promotion or an award. This news release tour is different because all service members were invited to participate, not just awardees.

Aviation Warfare Systems Operator Tim Dunaway to Lt. Len Montilla stood in front of the camera and answered questions for their hometown newspaper to print their stories.

The "Golden Swordsmen" are proud to participate and tell their stories to the world, whether it will be printed in a small town gazette or a large city newspaper.

USS Kamehameha Sailors visit Jordan - volunteer, help orphans

By J02 Joseph Rehana

SAILORS from the USS Kamehameha (SSN 642) recently took part in several community relations' projects while making an historic port visit to Aqaba, Jordan.

More than 20 Sailors visited the SOS Children's Village Aqaba, a shelter for orphaned and destitute children, to join in with painting, planting trees and playing games with the children they would assist and befriend over the next two days.

"It means a lot to the children to have these Sailors here letting them work alongside them,"

"The work and time we spend here is rewarding for us and lets us give a little part of ourselves to this community."

- Lt. j.g. Kevin Roach

said Feisel Metelka, the shelter's director.

"We have 72 orphans at the facility here and 112 at our Amman center, and anytime we can receive assistance is good."

The Kamehameha Sailors spent the afternoon painting and planting trees at the center with the children helping them dip brushes or clear un-

derbrush. The Sailors regrouped that evening and met with Jordanian Military members and the SOS children to clean a stretch of beach in the Aqaba Peace Park near the Israeli border.

"Getting the chance to share time with these children and let them get a better understanding about who we are is really why we're here today," said Electronics Technician 1st Class Joseph Favert from Seattle, WA.

"We are helping and having fun at the same time," said Lt. j.g. Kevin Roach from Atlanta, Georgia who was kicking a soccer ball around the children.

"The work and time we spend here is rewarding for us and lets us give a little part of ourselves to this community."

FASOTRAGRUPAC Det Hawaii Sailor wins COMNAVAIRPAC Shore SOY competition

By AWC(AW/NAC) Ron McMahon

FASOTRAGRUPAC

Aviation Anti-Submarine Warfare Operator(AW/SW/NAC) Charles L. Stotz was recognized as the Commander Naval Air Forces Pacific (COMNAVAIRPAC) Shore Sailor of the Year during a ceremony held recently at Naval Air Station (NAS) North Island, Calif. His selection was the end result of a weeklong competition in which he competed against two other finalists selected from the 45,000 forces assigned to COMNAVAIRPAC.

Enlisting in the Navy on May 8, 1989, Stotz attended Basic Training at NRTC San Diego, Calif. and graduated on July 31, 1989. Following Boot Camp he was selected for candidacy as an Aviation Anti-Submarine Warfare Operator and was transferred to Pensacola, Fla. for additional training. After completing initial flight candidate school and helicopter search and rescue swimmer training, he was assigned to Aviation Anti-Submarine Warfare Operator School in Millington, Tenn. on October 27, 1989. Upon Completion, he received a promotion to Petty Officer 3rd Class and reported to his first aviation unit, HSL-31, in San Diego, Calif.

On May 29, 1992 Stotz was promoted again to 2nd Class and trans-

ferred to HSL-37 at NAS Barbers Point, Hawaii. There he completed two Western Pacific (WESTPAC) deployments aboard USS Crommelin (FFG-37) and USS Port Royal (CG-73), upon completion of his tour at HSL-37 the newly-frocked 1st Class Petty Officer reported to the Fleet Aviation Specialized Operational Training Group Detachment(FASOTRAGRUPAC) NAS Barbers Point for duty as a Naval Instructor.

During his tour at FASOTRAGRUPAC DET HI, Stotz has excelled as a Naval Instructor. He displayed extraordinary motivation in qualifying to instruct 16 unique courses in a variety of areas including Under Sea Warfare Acoustics, Tactical Oceanography, Electronic Warfare, Inverse Synthetic Aperture Radar Image Interpretation, and Microcomputers.

This superior dedication to duty enabled FASOTRAGRUPAC DET Hawaii to continue to offer all of its courses despite a 55% reduction in manpower. Additionally, during 1999 Stotz was responsible for graduating 68 classes of 211 officers and enlisted with a zero failure rate. These numbers encompassed all Aviation Warfare Systems Operators stationed onboard Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay, which ensured the combat readiness of all-Central

Pacific Naval Air Patrol and Reconnaissance Forces.

Additionally, as the commands Senior Information's Systems Manager, Stotz designed and installed an 88-workstation local area network system for both administrative and instructional use by the detachment.

His ability to understand and develop computer networks has enabled this detachment to reap the benefits of 100 percent internet connectivity by all command members, online e-mail, message traffic processing, paperless office, and multimedia instruction for individual students. His actions established FASOTRAGRUPAC DET Hawaii as the standard for all Navy classroom instruction.

Additionally, he identified numerous Y2K deficiencies within the commands microcomputer hardware and software systems and implemented the necessary upgrades including procurement of replacement systems saving \$12,339 over initial cost estimates. Because of his actions, FASOTRAGRUPAC DET Hawaii was fully Y2K compliant 6 months ahead of schedule.

Stotz has received numerous awards including five Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals, four Meritorious Unit Commendations, two Battle Efficiency Ribbons, three Good Conduct Awards, the National



CNAP file photo

From left to right AME1(AW) Ricardo Farnum (Sea SOY winner), NC1(AW) Martha Lara (Sea SOY finalist), AT1(AW/SW) Monte Temple (Sea SOY finalist), AW1(AW/SW) Charles Stotz (Shore SOY winner), AW1(AW/NAC) Daniel Stone (Shore SOY finalist), AZ1(AW) Douglas Dowell (Shore SOY finalist).

Defense Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, two Sea-service/deployment ribbons, and the Expert Rifle Medal. Additionally, he has been designated as an Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist, Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist, Naval Air crewman, and a Master Training Specialist.

Most recently, Stotz completed his

Associates of Arts degree in Business Administration from Chaminade University. Despite the rigorous schedule of the Navy he completed his degree with honors maintaining a straight "A" average.

As a result of being selected COMNAVAIRPAC Shore Sailor of the Year, Stotz will go on to compete at the CINCPACFLT Sailor of the Year Competition.